

ABSTRACT

A method for treating obstructive sleep disorders includes accessing the interior of the tongue through an incision made in the skin in the vicinity of the jaw of a patient; advancing an instrument through the incision into the interior of the tongue; and removing an amount of tissue from the interior of the base of the tongue with the instrument. The present invention includes forming a cavity or plurality of channels in the tongue. The cavity may be collapsed using a suture, fastener or bioadhesive. An emplaced suture may be provided to hold the cavity in a collapsed position thereby reducing the degree of obstruction. Additionally, thermal energy may be applied to the tissue surface immediately surrounding the channels to cause thermal damage to the tissue surface, thereby creating hemostasis and stiffening the surrounding tissue structure.